

ABSOLUTE BATMAN™



ALL IN

13+
TEEN

6

SNYDER
DRAGOTTA
MARTIN

ALL IN



ABSOLUTE



Written by **DENIZ CAMP** • Art and cover by **JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**

A startling evolution of the Absolute Universe beginning in **MARCH**



--IDENTIFIED AS **ROMAN SIONIS**, IS DROPPING CRATES FILLED WITH **MASKS AND FIREARMS** ACROSS GOTHAM CITY IN AN EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO JOIN HIS **PARTY ANIMALS'** REIGN OF VIOLENCE.



EVERYONE WATCHING IS URGED TO STAY **INSIDE** AND LOCK YOUR DOORS.

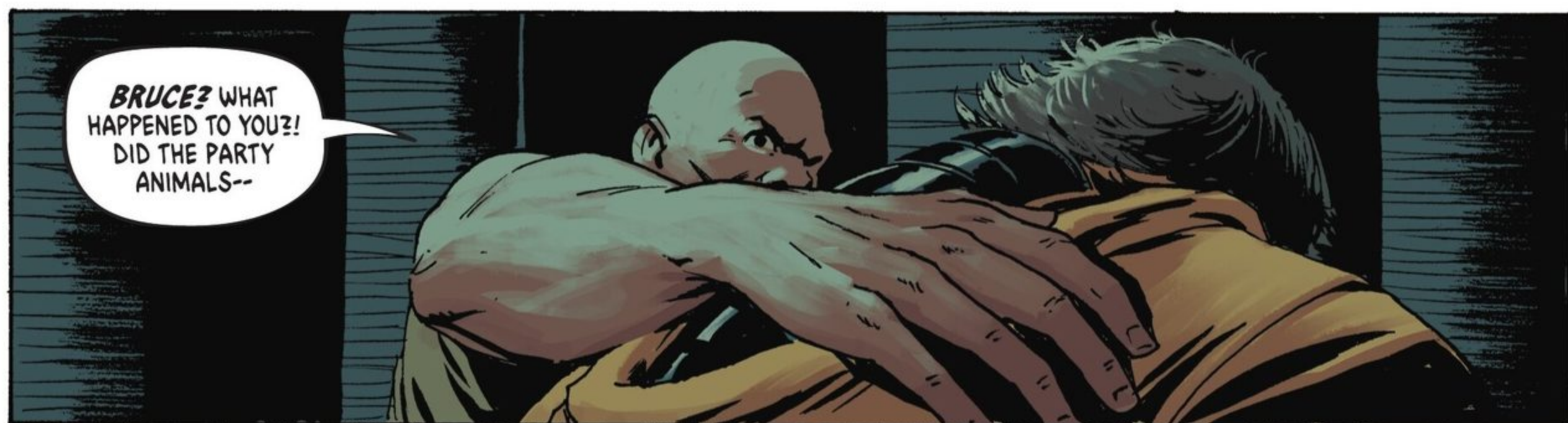
KRAASH



OH, YOU PICKED THE **WRONG** GYM, CHIEF. I'M WAYLON "CROC" JONES, FORMER AFC CHAMP, AND I'VE BEEN **HUNGRY** FOR A GOOD FIGHT FOR TOO--



IT'S ME, WAY...



BRUCE? WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? DID THE PARTY ANIMALS--



--OW!

WHAT THE... WHY...



BECAUSE I'M **BATMAN**.

AND I NEED YOUR HELP.



ABSOLUTE
BATMAN

"THE ZOO"

PART SIX





WHAT THE HELL IS IT WITH THESE?

MAR...

HEY, YOU! STOP BLOCKING THAT *CRATE*!



MY GOD. JIM, THE *MONEY* HE'S OFFERING...



initializing system...
setup profile...

YOU!
STAY WHERE YOU ARE!

i.d. potential targets... (loading)

start earning...
robbery ...\$ 50k
arson ...\$ 100k
assault ...\$ 150k
murder ...\$ 250k

NO. ALL THE MASKS IN THE OTHER *CRATE* ARE *TAKEN*!

total crimes committed: \$ 0.00



target i.d.
James Gordon
high value...

MAR! YOU NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE, *NOW*.

murder
Mayor
James Gordon
\$ 1,000,000.00



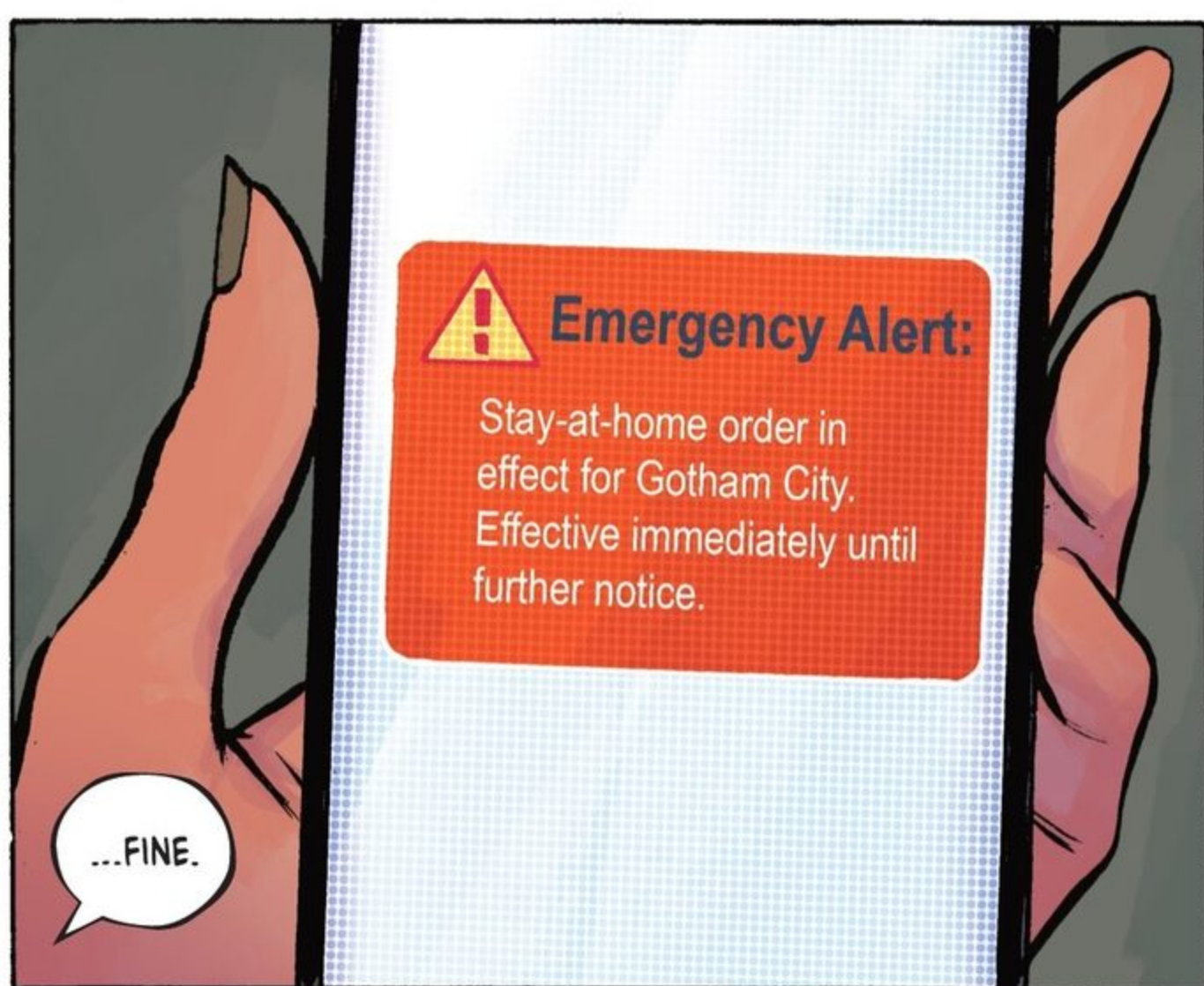
I SAID *MOVE*, OLD MAN!

DAMMIT, MAR!



JIM. YOU'RE A *TARGET*.

AND I'M YOUR DEPUTY MAYOR. SO *NO*, I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE. WE NEED TO STOP THIS.





YOU'RE @#\$\$% **BATMAN?**! AND YOU DIDN'T THINK **MAYBE** THIS WAS SOMETHING TO MENTION?



I WAS TRYING TO PROTECT YOU, OZZIE...

...ALL OF YOU.



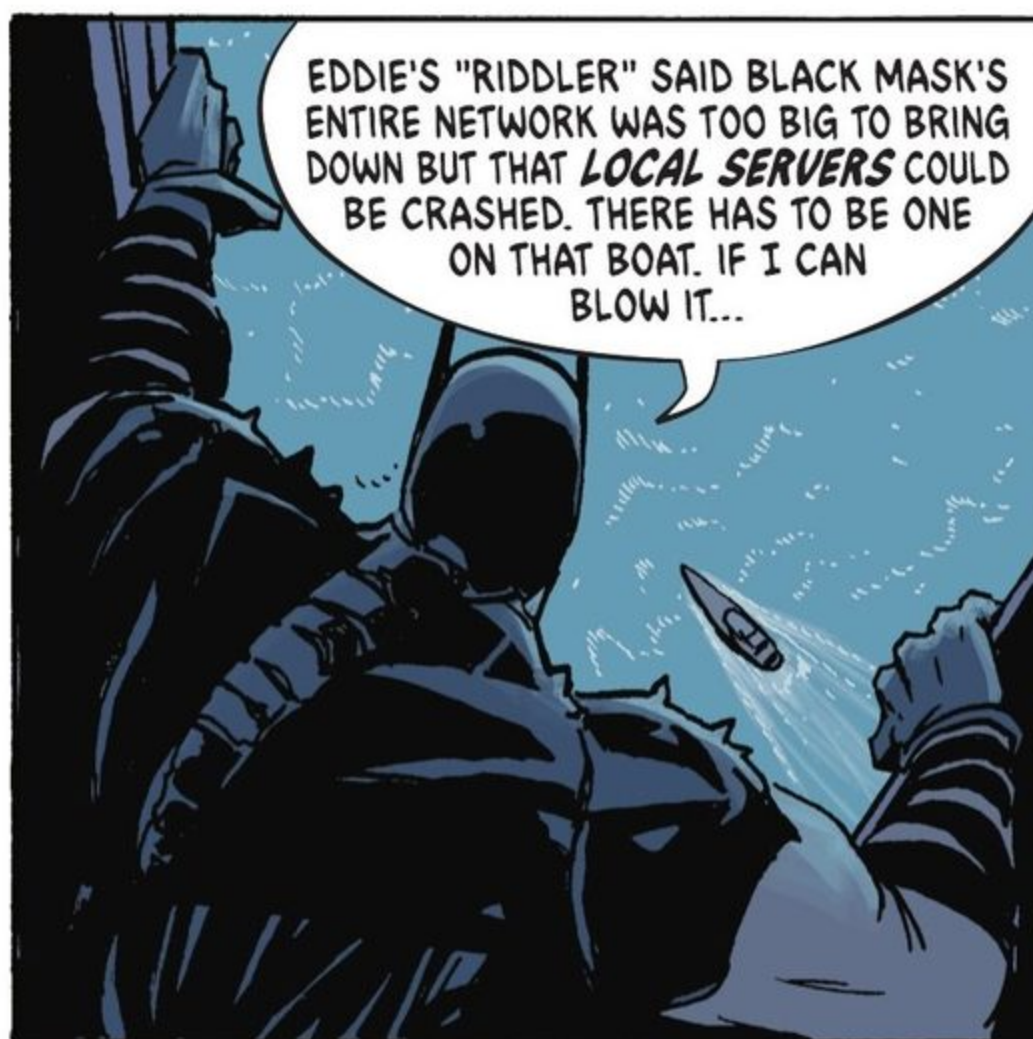
WELL, IT'S OUT OF THE @#\$\$%& BAG NOW. WAYLON WANTS TO **PUNCH** YOU. HARVEY WANTS TO **ARREST** YOU. EDDIE SAYS HE GUESSED IT WEEKS AGO, THE JACKASS.

WHO **KNOWS** WHAT SELINA WILL...
ACTUALLY, SHE'LL PROBABLY THINK IT'S HOT.



BUT **ME?**! PERSONALLY, I FIND IT ABSOLUTELY--

THERE!



EDDIE'S "RIDDLER" SAID BLACK MASK'S ENTIRE NETWORK WAS TOO BIG TO BRING DOWN BUT THAT **LOCAL SERVERS** COULD BE CRASHED. THERE HAS TO BE ONE ON THAT BOAT. IF I CAN BLOW IT...



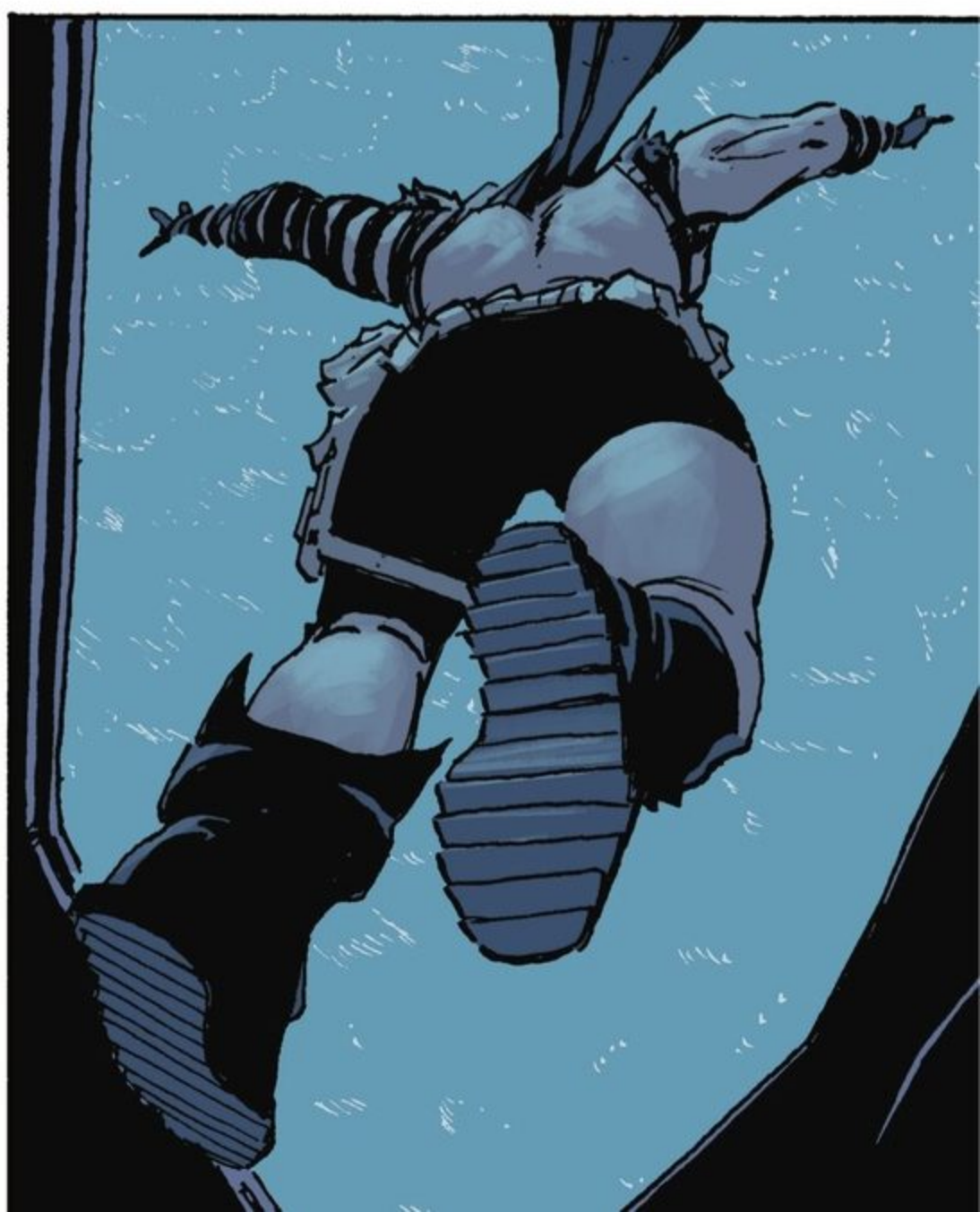
BLOW IT?



BRUCE, YOU DO THIS, YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN. I **BARELY** HAVE ENOUGH @#\$\$% FUEL TO MAKE IT BACK TO GOTHAM. I CAN'T STICK AROUND TO SAVE YOU!

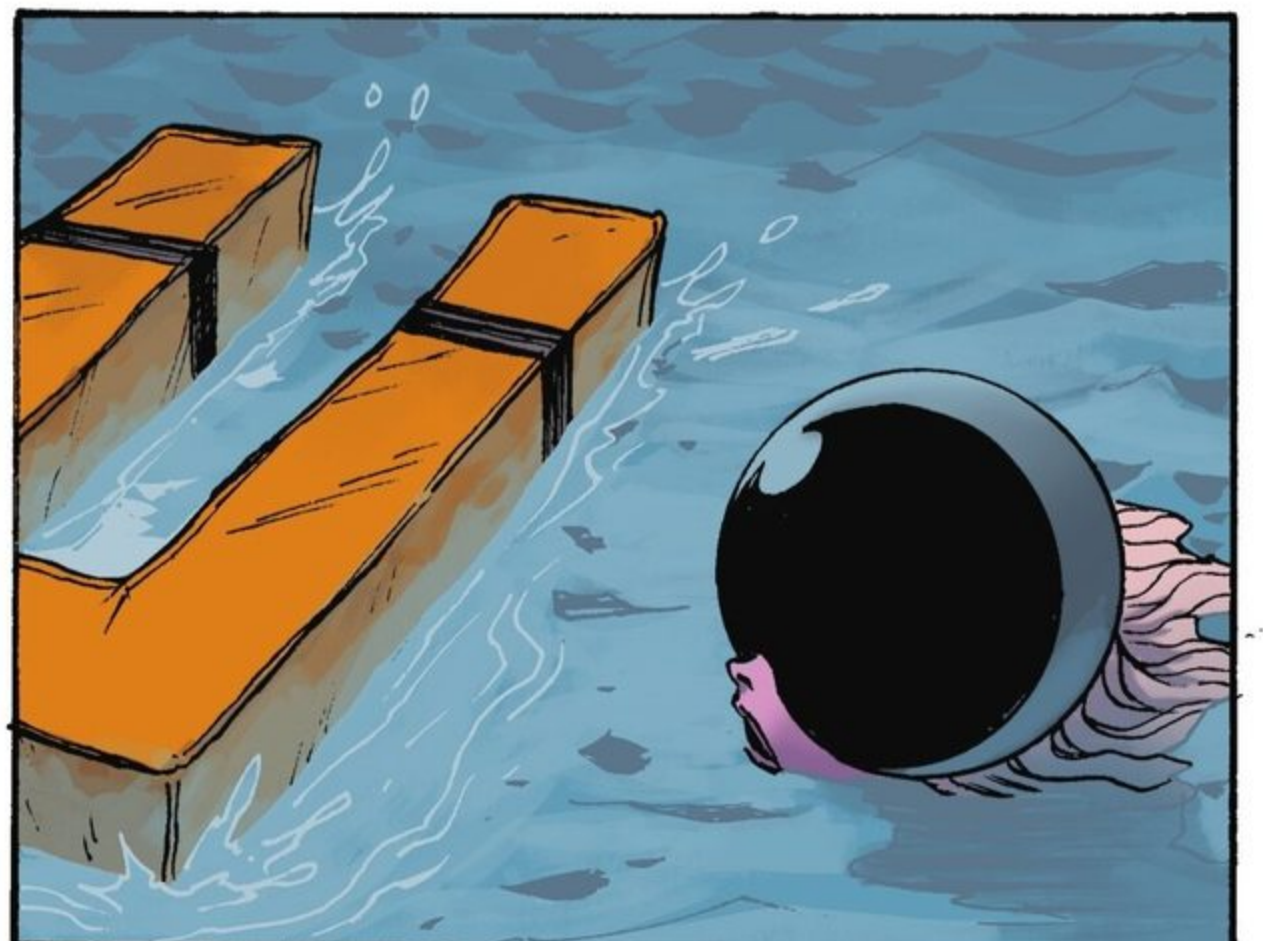


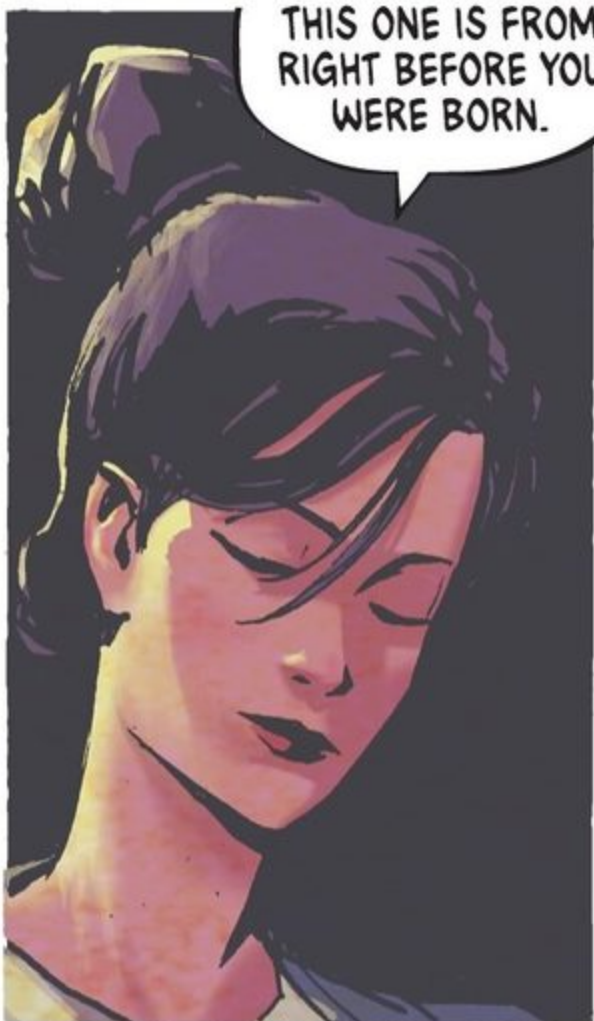
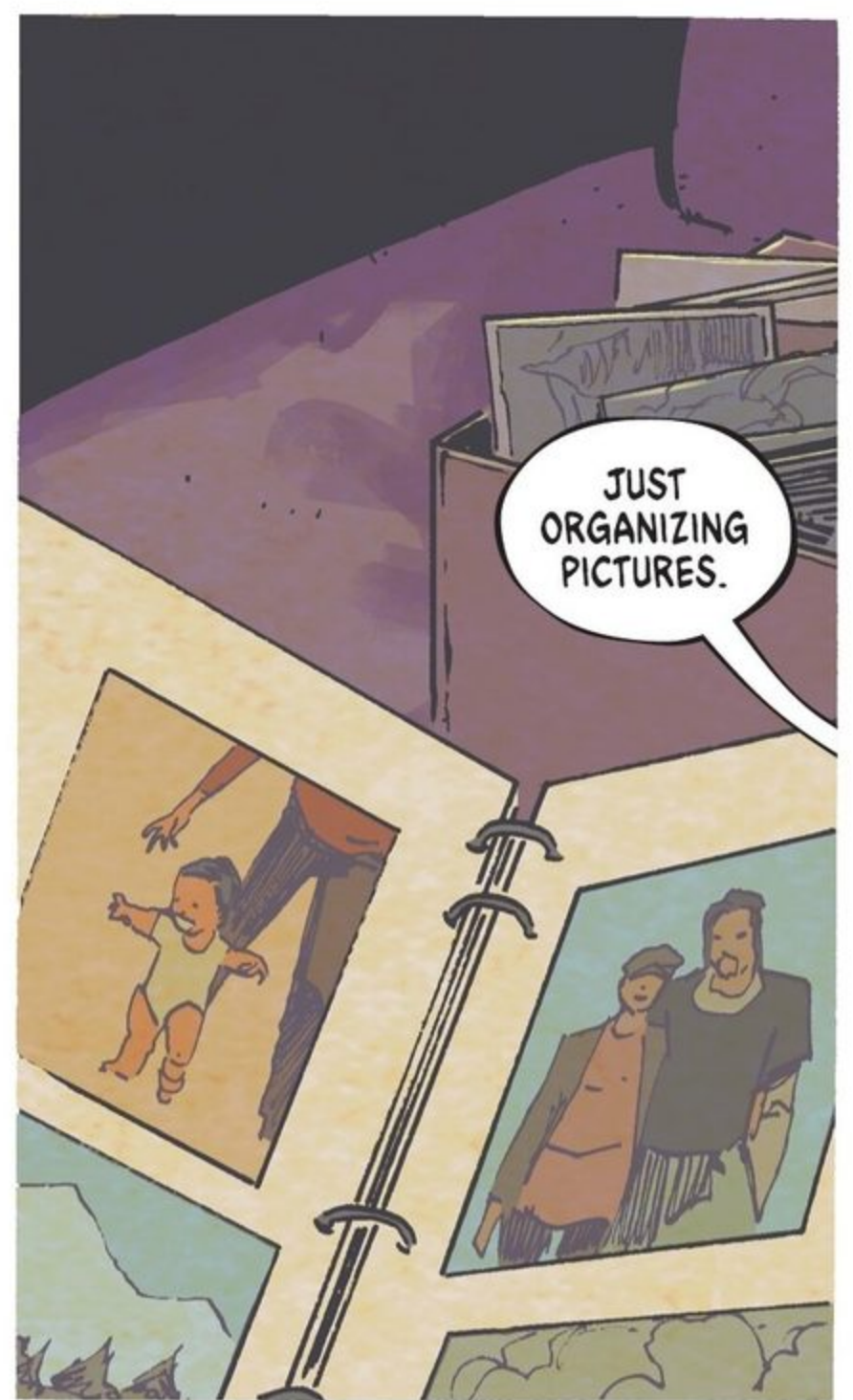
I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO... OR ANYONE ELSE.













"...HE SNAPPED IT AT THE ZOO, JUST BEFORE THE SHOOTING STARTED."

YOU CAN THREATEN ALL YOU WANT, BUT MAYOR GORDON AND I AREN'T GIVING YOU THESE MASKS!

BACK AWAY! FOR THE SAKE OF THE WHOLE CITY!

OH, THAT'S *RICH*! ALL THIS HAPPENED ON *YOUR* WATCH, GORDON! WE'RE JUST TRYING TO GET SOMETHING FOR OURSELVES BEFORE IT ALL GOES TO HELL!



YOU ALL *SAW* BATMAN'S FEED! ALL BLACK MASK WANTS IS GOTHAM IN CHAOS! HE'S USING US! MAYBE SO HIS CRONIES CAN PROFIT, OR GET MORE CONTROL... WHO KNOWS?

BUT ALL THIS IS A DAMN *GAME* TO HIM AND THE ONLY WAY *WE* WIN IS BY *NOT* PLAYING.

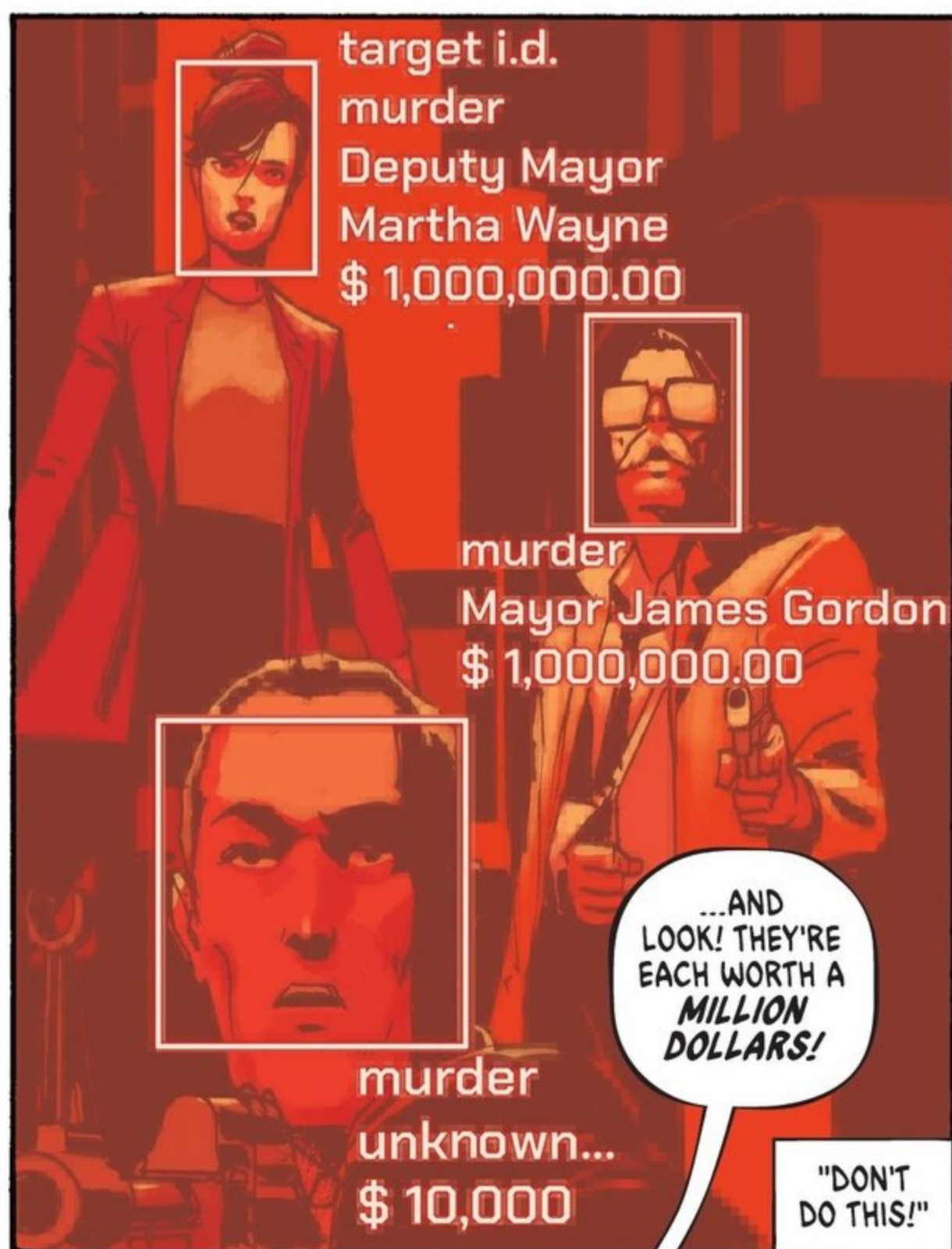


YEAH, WELL, MAYBE THAT'S *ALL* THAT'S LEFT THESE DAYS--A GAME MOST OF US NEVER GET TO PLAY UNLESS WE GET LUCKY. AND YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN QUICKER, FOLKS.



CHECK THE *VALUES* ON THEM!

THE GUY IS SMALL TIME, BUT THAT'S GORDON AND HIS DEPUTY MAYOR...



target i.d.
murder
Deputy Mayor
Martha Wayne
\$ 1,000,000.00

murder
Mayor James Gordon
\$ 1,000,000.00

murder
unknown...
\$ 10,000

...AND LOOK! THEY'RE EACH WORTH A *MILLION DOLLARS*!

"DON'T DO THIS!"



"...GET US OUT OF THIS DAMNED CITY ONCE AND FOR ALL."

BAHHH!



HEH.
KOFF

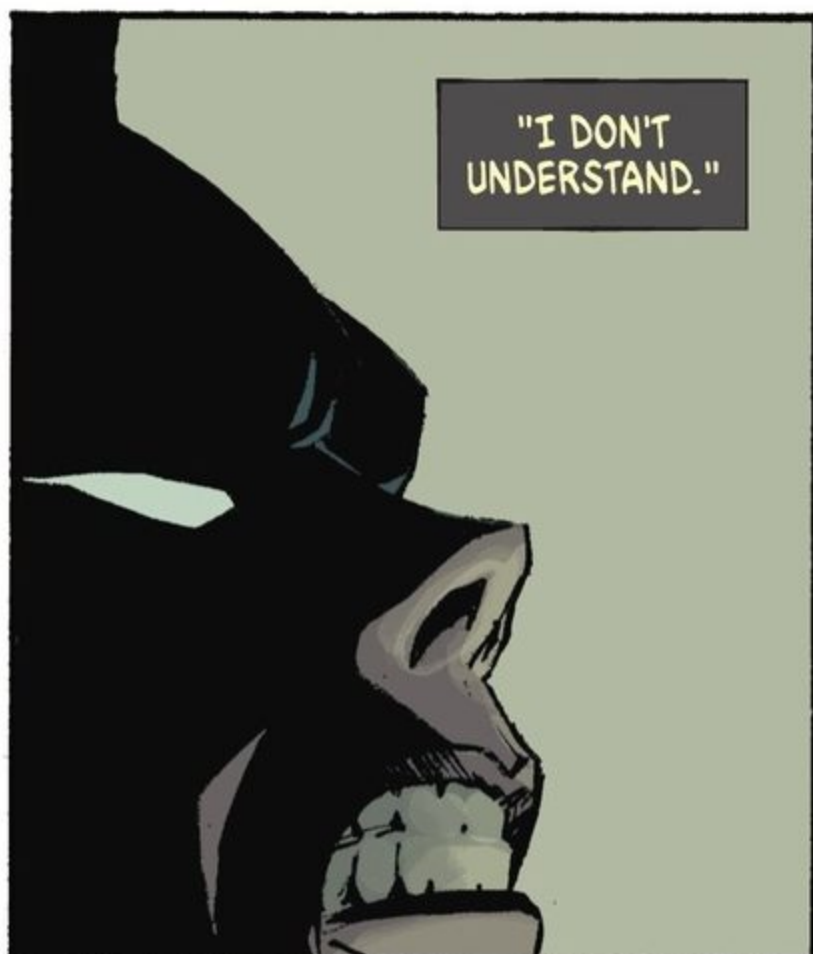
YOU *STILL*
DON'T GET IT,
DO YOU? YOU THINK
YOU CAN *STOP* THEM?
YOU THINK YOU CAN STOP
ANYTHING THAT'S
COMING? LET
ME TELL YOU A
LITTLE--







"I *KNOW* THIS PICTURE IS FROM THAT DAY, BRUCE. THAT'S PART OF *WHY* I LOVE IT."



"I DON'T UNDERSTAND."

WELL BABY, WHEN THINGS ARE ROUGH, BELIEVING YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE? BEING *HOPEFUL*? IT'S NOT EASY.



YOU KNOW I *LIED* ABOUT THE PIGS? MY FAVORITE THING WASN'T WHEN THEY LOVED IT. NAH...THE BEST WAS WHEN THEY FOUGHT! WHEN THEY STRUGGLED RIGHT UP UNTIL THE END!



BUT THAT'S WHAT I SEE WHEN I LOOK AT THESE PICTURES.



WHEN THEY NEVER BELIEVED THE BOLT COULD COME! WHEN THEY THOUGHT THEY COULD WIN! THE *SCREAM* THEY MADE...



BECAUSE NO MATTER HOW HARD THINGS GOT, AND THEY WERE ROUGH SOMETIMES, YOUR DAD STAYED HOPEFUL.



THAT *SHRIEK!* BEST SOUND IN THE WORLD!



BUT HE WAS *ALWAYS* AT HIS *MOST* HOPEFUL...ABOUT *YOU*.



DID IT...SOUND... ANYTHING LIKE THIS?



CRASH!!

A MILLION FOR EACH OF THEM? THAT'S REAL MONEY, MAN.

murder Martha Wayne \$ 1,000,000.00

murder James Gordon \$ 1,000,000.00

...YOU @#\$\$% LUNATIC. YOU WILL **LOSE** EVERYTHING.

EVERYONE YOU LOVE. I PROMISE YOU. YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'VE STARTED...

I CAN'T CUT DOWN A WOMAN. LET'S DO GORDON AND SPLIT IT.

FINE! LADY, **GO!** GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE WE CHANGE OUR MINDS.

"MOM? I KEEP HAVING THESE NIGHTMARES... WHERE YOU DIE."

target i.d. Martha Wayne murder \$ 1,000,000.00

NO! I SAW YOUR FACES BEFORE YOU PUT ON THOSE MASKS. YOU SHOOT HIM, WHEN ALL THIS IS OVER I WILL MAKE SURE YOU **PAY** FOR IT!

murder James Gordon \$ 1,000,000.00

MAR, WHAT ARE YOU--

SO IF YOU'RE KILLING HIM? YOU MIGHT AS WELL START WITH ME.

BUT, YOU ARE **BETTER** THAN THIS, YOU HEAR ME? **WE** ARE BETTER THAN THIS!

murder Martha Wayne \$ 1,000,000.00

"I WILL DIE ONE DAY, BRUCE..."

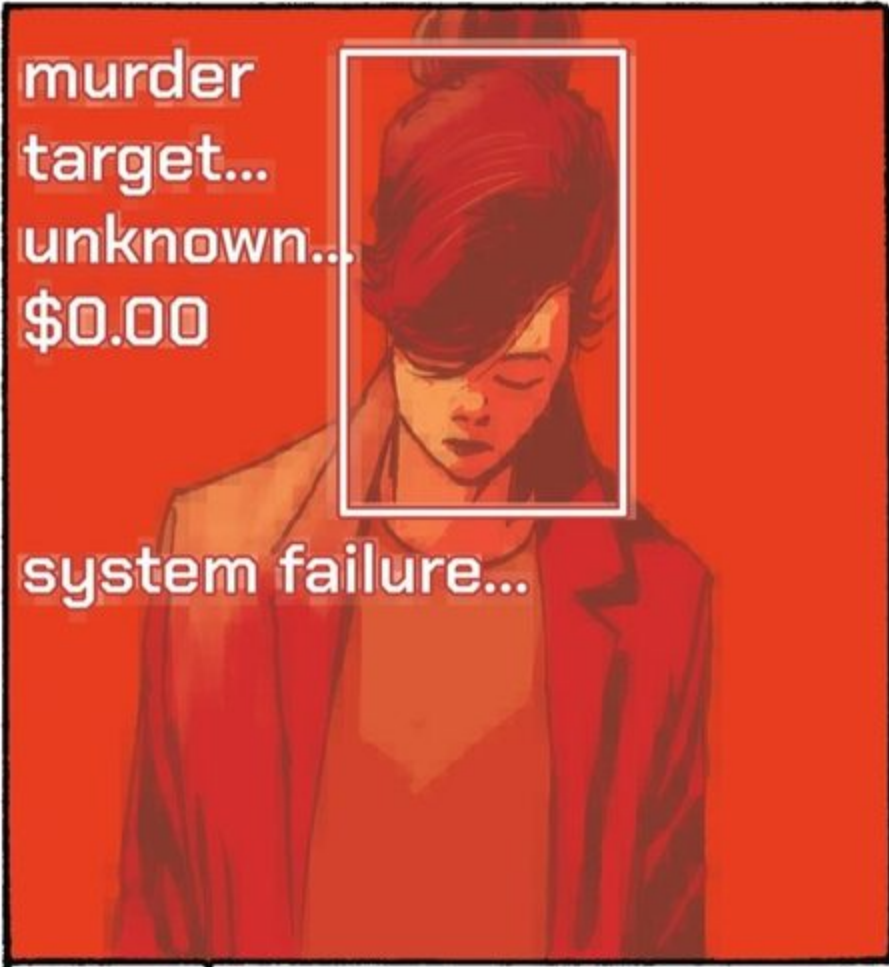
PING

I'M SORRY, MRS. WAYNE. I AM.

CHIK CHIK

BOOM

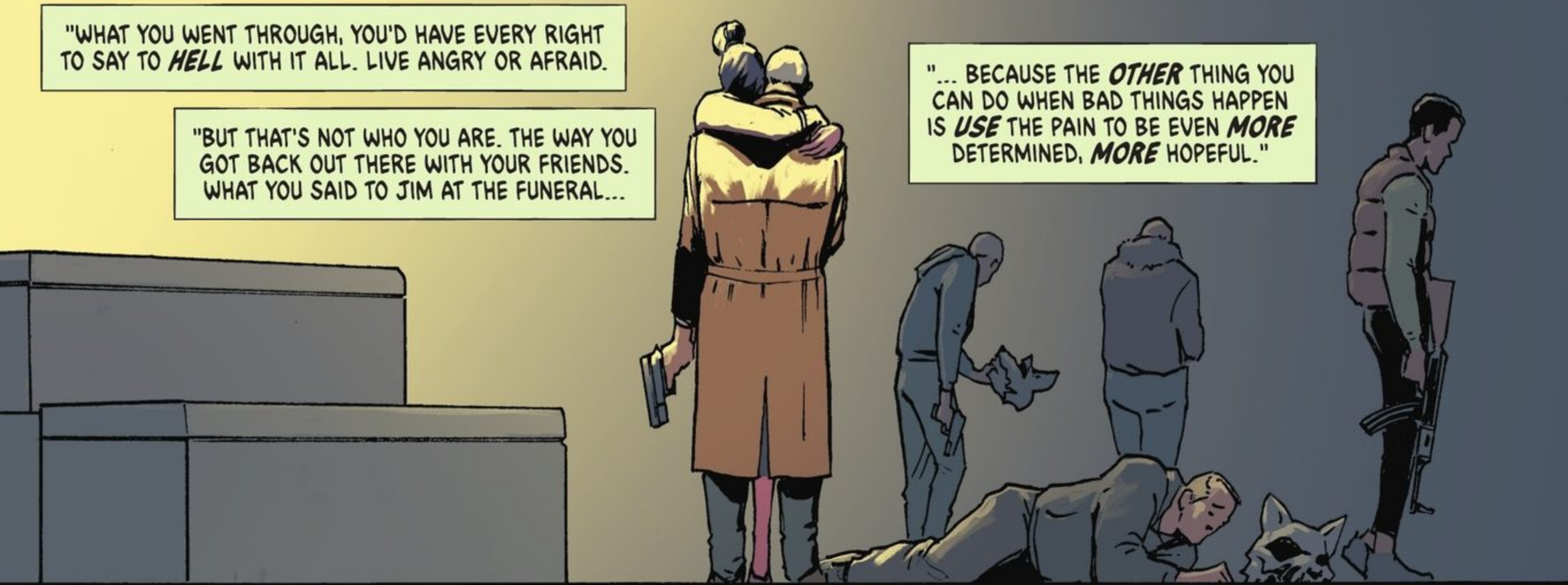
"...AND YOU WILL, TOO..."



"WHAT YOU WENT THROUGH, YOU'D HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO SAY TO *HELL* WITH IT ALL. LIVE ANGRY OR AFRAID.

"BUT THAT'S NOT WHO YOU ARE. THE WAY YOU GOT BACK OUT THERE WITH YOUR FRIENDS. WHAT YOU SAID TO JIM AT THE FUNERAL..."

"... BECAUSE THE *OTHER* THING YOU CAN DO WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN IS *USE* THE PAIN TO BE EVEN *MORE* DETERMINED, *MORE* HOPEFUL."





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EXECUTIVE EDITOR: CHRIS CONROY • BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER

EPILOGUE.

SIR? SIONIS
IS REPORTING. IT
SEEMS THERE'S BEEN
A SMALL...SNAG IN
GOTHAM CITY.

I'M
AWARE.



IT'S
TIME.

GET
BANE.

TO BE CONTINUED...









I STAY AWAKE ALL NIGHT, TRYING NOT TO THINK OF...



...OF THE SMOKE...

...OF WHAT'S WAITING FOR ME IN IT...



HAVE YOU EVER TRIED NOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING?



IT'S ALL YOU CAN THINK OF.

TO BE CONTINUED IN

ABSOLUTE
MARTIAN MANHUNTER #1

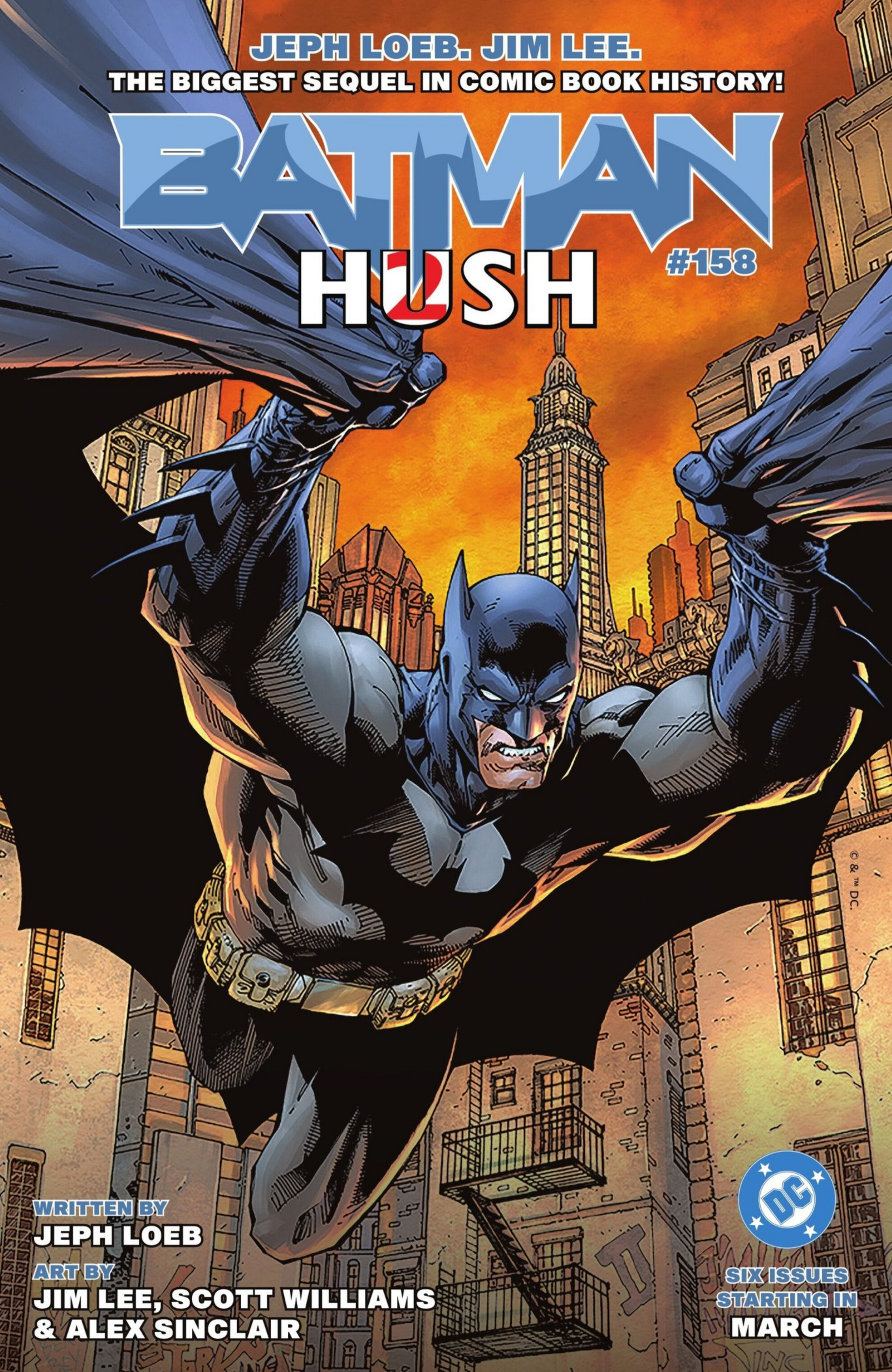
ON SALE IN MARCH!

JEPH LOEB. JIM LEE.
THE BIGGEST SEQUEL IN COMIC BOOK HISTORY!

BATMAN

HUSH

#158



WRITTEN BY
JEPH LOEB

ART BY
JIM LEE, SCOTT WILLIAMS
& ALEX SINCLAIR



SIX ISSUES
STARTING IN
MARCH

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BATMAN HUSH

INTERVIEW WITH JEPH LOEB AND JIM LEE

For more than two decades, “Hush” by writer Jeph Loeb and artist Jim Lee has stood as one of the most popular and influential Batman stories of the 21st century. Now the comics superstars have reunited for a six-part sequel starting in *Batman* #158 and titled “H2SH,” with Hush, the titular villain introduced back in 2002, out for revenge against the Dark Knight.

Why was now the right time for “H2SH”?

Jim Lee: We’ve talked about coming back and doing a follow-up to “Hush” for a while. For a variety of reasons, the timing was never right. Because we’re doing the All In initiative, where we launched the Absolute line but still wanted crazy things to happen in the core line, it made this return to Hush the right opportunity.

The challenge we had was, how do we recapture that excitement, yet do something new? Jeph, to his credit, crafted a story that feels very much like the opposite side of the coin to what he did 20 years ago. It establishes a new status quo for Batman, new villains, new looks, new locations.

Jeph Loeb: For 20 years, everywhere I’ve gone, people have asked me whether or not we’re going to do it again. My answer was always very honest: When Jim’s ready to go, I’ll be ready to go. I was in a little tiny airport in Italy, outside of Lucca; my phone rings, and Jim says, “I think it’s time for us to revisit these characters and to really come up with something that can not only build on what we did 20 years ago, but take it to the next level.” That was the challenge. Certainly artistically, I have no doubt in my mind that Jim, Scott [Williams], and Alex [Sinclair] outdid themselves.



How has Hush himself evolved between these two stories?

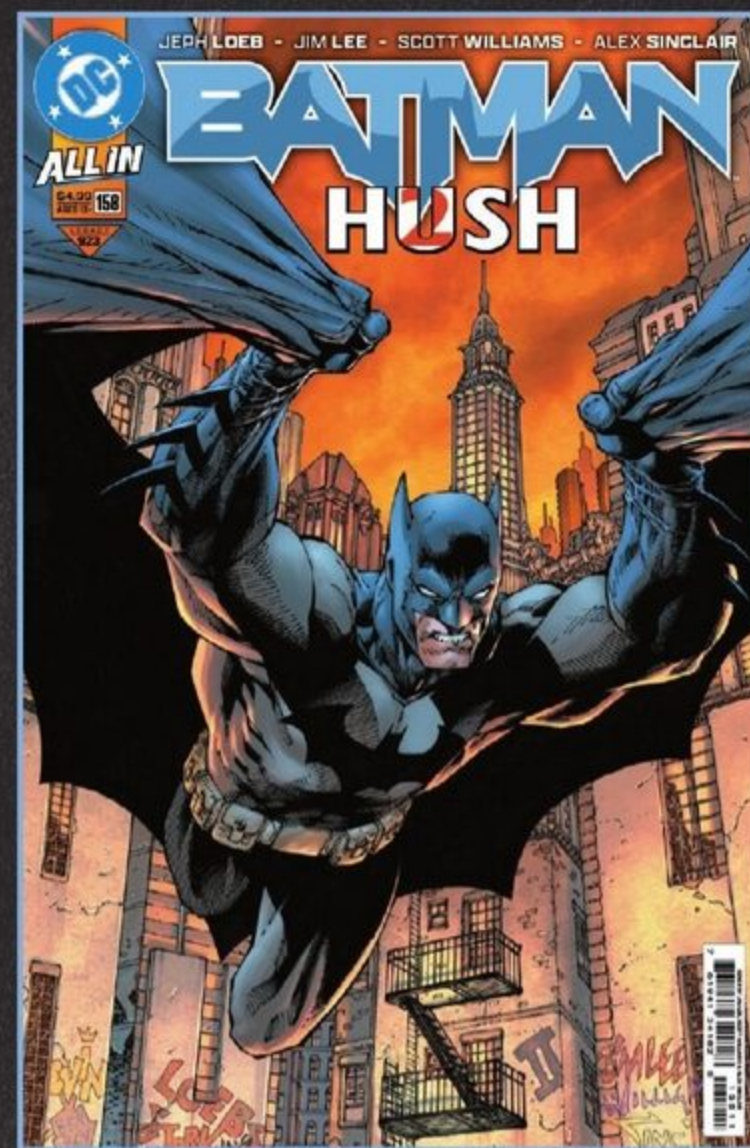
Loeb: So much of what we did in the first story was to play with, “Who is Hush? What does he want? What’s going on?” We’ve now established all that, so in many ways, this is a revenge story. He’s learned so much, and one of the great things about the character is that he’s a master manipulator. He likes the game of it. It’s like moving pieces on a chessboard. You don’t want to always play the same game. You want to take it in a new direction.



Jim, in what ways has your visual approach to these characters changed since the original “Hush”?

Lee: All the characters resemble the iconic versions of themselves, but we changed surface elements—melding the work that was done 20 years ago with the work we’re doing today.

We’re trying to do new kinds of shots, new angles, new color schemes. We’re challenging ourselves across the board, because we know there are high expectations. It’s also a great way to motivate ourselves, to do hopefully our best creative work.



DON’T MISS BATMAN #158, THE FIRST CHAPTER OF “H2SH,” ON SALE IN MARCH!

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